

Dear Members of the Appropriations Committee,

February 16, 2016

I am here today in regards to the proposed cuts in H.B. No. 5044, with special attention given to the proposed cuts/elimination of CommPACT Schools as stated in Line Item T507 for \$350,000 for 2016-2017.

Although there are many proposed cuts and eliminations of many important programs and services throughout our State in this Bill, I am here today, specifically to ask that you not eliminate CommPACT schools.

I am a parent volunteer of 6 ½ years and counting now in the Waterbury Public Schools. I am fortunate to have been able to be a part of a CommPACT school in Waterbury at West Side Middle School.

CommPACT Schools bring parents, administrators, community members, and teachers together through a collaborative effort to help students succeed, while promoting parental engagement.

This is made possible through the funding each year that is given to support the work of CommPACT. Last year I was informed of proposed cuts and met with a couple of our legislator's at West Side Middle School in our Parent Resource Room, which was funded by CommPACT for parents. It is a room that was created with parents in mind. It is Our Room!

When parents come into the school with an issue, a meeting, anything, they can come in to this room and sit down, have a cup of coffee, talk to other parents that may be there at the time, research on the computers, check e-mails, and the list goes on. Our Parent Resource Room has helped many parents to be able to apply for jobs, write their resumes, and print out needed forms for a variety of things, including some who have decided to continue their education by going back to college. All of this made possible by the support and encouragement from CommPACT.

CommPACT helps us to hold a variety of workshops, which we open to our entire community, such as: Connecticut Money School and a Couponing class that we hold two times a year, just to name a few. CommPACT provides the attendees of these workshops with all of the things they may need to successfully get all that they can out of the session, such as printed packets, meals if they fall during that time, as well as helping with the cost for each participant if there is one for the workshop that is being offered. Our room also has many resources available to parents and the community.

I have asked for the funding of CommPACT to be supported and not cut last year. I am asking that here once again. I ask with a plan in mind though. The CommPACT team would like to look into grant funding to possibly keep the program going, but if you eliminate the program we won't be able to do that. I ask that you please reconsider the elimination that is being made here, not a cut, but a program and a service to the community that would be gone.

I am also asking that if any of you are not familiar with CommPACT Schools that you please e-mail me or call so you can come visit us at our school. There is so much more that CommPACT does that there is not enough time to share it all today.

Thank you for your time. I hope to hear from many of you very soon.